

Lampides boeticus L. (Lep.: Lycaenidae) the
First Recorded Breeding in Britain

By PAUL SMART, F.R.E.S.*

For some time it has been believed that the first report of the Longtailed Blue breeding in this country was that of L. H. S. Chevallier¹ and L. Christie². This event, following the capture of a female in July 1952 at Ranmore, near Dorking in Surrey, is also noted by T. G. Howarth³.

Recently a much earlier breeding success was brought to my attention by Mr. Roderick Cavaliero of Tunbridge Wells. The account of these events follows in his own words:

"I found the female resting on a blade of grass in a waste patch between houses some quarter of a mile from the sea at Bexhill, Sussex. It was 7.0 p.m. on 31st July, 1945—I was 17 at the time. It was in good condition but faded (and much smaller than its progeny!) I rather unthinkingly killed it then and there and having identified it wrote to the *Times*. The Course of Nature column (date lost but this could be had from the *Times*) dealt generally with the coincidence that two specimens had been sighted that summer and chided me for killing a female that might have laid eggs.

The rebuke was well-given because the waste land was covered thickly with Broom (*Sarothamnus scoparius*). But she had already done her stuff. I cannot remember when I started looking for larvae but the date of the *Times* column would establish it (about middle to end of August, I guess). My mother and I after several hours searching eventually found our first larva, well advanced, probably in its final larval stage and we found over a dozen others. I lost a few since they gnawed their way through the gauze of the boxes I kept them in, but I eventually saw the following emerge from pupae:

19.9.45: 2 ♂♂, 2 ♀♀

20.9.45: 2 ♂♂

21.9.45: 2 ♀♀

22.9.45: 1 ♀

23.9.45: 1 ♂

I mated one pair of those which emerged on the 19th September and the female laid eggs, presumably on the broom which may still have been in flower. Unfortunately my record fails there as I have lost the diary I kept of progress. I had the usual trouble of cannibalism and foodplant—I think I kept them going on domestic pea pods but I did have a second brood, all males, two of which I have kept in my collection. I lost a few which became very ragged waiting for females to emerge and I damaged one or two on the setting board. The second emergence must have been about the middle of November. I felt I had made history of a sort and wrote again to the *Times* but with no response."

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The Cavalieros must be congratulated on the diligence of their search for the larvae since these are not easily found, frequently burrowing deep into the flower buds. That such a relatively large number was discovered strongly suggests there had been more than one female in the area. It is interesting to note that while the *Times* mentioned only one other capture, in fact 1945 was the year in which the largest numbers of this rare migrant were recorded. C. B. Williams⁴ gives a total for the year of 31, although the Cavaliero record may not have been included. Further, this year was outstanding for the numbers of other rare migratory species recorded, especially *Pontia daplidice* L.

Obtaining a second brood was praiseworthy but not unusual. In suitable habitats abroad this species is continuously brooded. I have examined all the specimens in Mr. Cavaliero's collection, including the original worn female which is, as he comments, rather small. He kindly allowed me to have three specimens from the original brood (a male and two females) which are now in the British collection at the Saruman Museum. I am grateful to Mr. Cavaliero for his notes enabling me to set the record straight on this point. Those who believe that our names are in some way linked to our fates may find some significance in the fact that "Chevallier" and "Cavaliero" translate the same!

References

- (1) Chevallier, L. H. S., 1952. *Entomologist's Rec. J. Var.*, **64**: 274-7.
- (2) Christie, L., 1953. *Entomologist's Gaz.*, **4**: 202-4.
- (3) Howarth, T. G., 1973. *South's British Butterflies*, p. 75.
- (4) Williams, C. B., 1958. *Insect Migration*, p. 226.

PAMMENE LUEDERSIANA SORHAGEN: A SECOND RECORD FROM SCOTLAND. — This species was placed on the British List by G. H. Youden on the evidence of a specimen captured at Aviemore, Inverness-shire on 23.v.64 by the late D. G. Marsh (*Ent. Rec.*, **86**: 197). On 21.vii.75 my wife and I collected spinnings of *Myrica gale* at Tulloch Moore in the same area. A female *P. luedersiana* emerged from these in a warm room on 26.i.76. I must add that there is a remote possibility that the foodplant was *Potentilla erecta*, since the breeding container bears the label "Myrica spinnings + *Potentilla erecta* (2), Tulloch Moor, 21.vii.75". I remember well including the *Potentilla* spinnings because I was certain that they contained *Acleris aspersana* (Hübner) and that confusion would not arise. One *A. aspersana* duly emerged on 11.viii.75 but the other spinning, which may not even have been tenanted, produced nothing. The *P. luedersiana* larva left its foodplant and pupated in the tissue lining of the container. Unfortunately I did not describe it or the spinning, having no reason to think I had anything unusual. As far as I can estimate after the lapse of time, the map reference of the spot where we took the larva is NH(28)966160. Take plenty of insect repellent or you yourself will be repelled by the mosquitos. — A. M. EMMET, Labrey Cottage, Victoria Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex.